

**SANPETE COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING**

**April 30, 2013, 1:00 P.M.**

Sanpete County Courthouse, 160 North Main, Room 101, Manti, Utah

Present are: Commission Chair Claudia Jarrett, Commissioner Jon Cox, County Attorney Brody Keisel, and County Clerk Sandy Neill. Commissioner Steve Frischknecht appears by phone. Zoning Administrator Scott Olsen is also present.

Meeting is called to order by Commission Chair Claudia Jarrett.

**APPROVE A RESOLUTION TO INITIATE PROCEEDINGS TO AMEND THE COUNTY GENERAL PLAN TO INCLUDE MORE DETAILED PROVISIONS FOR MANAGING THE GREATER SAGE GROUSE**

The purpose of this meeting is to pass a resolution regarding our intention to amend the General Plan by adding to it a Greater Sage Grouse Management Plan. Resolution 04 30 2013 outlines our intention to do so with a goal to protect, maintain, improve and enhance Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat and populations in designated Sage Grouse Management Areas (SGMA's) of the County. This plan follows the state's plan quite closely. The Commissioners found that Sanpete County is part of the Carbon Sage Grouse Management program, and a management plan has been developed. Sanpete County was not notified that we were part of this working group, and have not had the opportunity to participate in the planning. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) created a proposed map, the Carbon management group created a modified map, and the State of Utah identifies areas in yet another map. The Narrows are shown as part of the SGMA in the BLM map. The Commissioners will make sure that the Narrows are not designated as SGMA in the Sanpete County SGMA map. We are unsure at this time how much of the property is private land. The hope is that a very small percent is private property. Uintah County and Carbon County have done extensive work on the GRSG issue. As the counties go forth developing plans, it is hoped that we will be able to stay close to the plan made by the State of Utah. This unity should give the Counties bargaining power with the BLM. Motion is made by Commissioner Cox to approve Resolution #04 30 2013. The motion is seconded by Commissioner Frischknecht, and the motion passes.

**APPROVE THE BLM CONFORMITY REVIEW**

We have not yet received the conformity review from the Utah Association of Counties (UAC). The review should show that our intention to adopt the state plan is now not in compliance or consistency with B, C, and D proposed alternatives of the BLM Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and we will add ours on the Narrows with a map. Motion is made by Commissioner Frischknecht to approve sending the BLM Conformity Review no later than Monday, May 6, 2013. The motion is seconded by Commissioner Cox, and the motion passes.

Motion is made by Commissioner Cox to adjourn. The motion is seconded by Commissioner Jarrett, and the motion passes.

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 P.M.

ATTEST: *Sandy Neill*  
Sandy Neill  
Sanpete County Clerk

APPROVED: *Claudia Jarrett*  
Claudia Jarrett  
Commission Chair

# RESOLUTION #04 30 2013

## Of the Sanpete County Board of Commissioners

### To Initiate Proceedings to Amend the County General Plan To Include More Detailed Provisions for Managing the Greater Sage Grouse

#### STATEMENT OF SUPPORT AND PROPOSAL

The Sanpete County Board of Commissioners supports the following policy for managing the Greater Sage Grouse on lands within the County, and the Sanpete County Board of Commissioners proposes to immediately initiate the statutory county general plan amendment process to consider amending the general plan accordingly, subject to and conditioned upon careful review and consideration of public comment after public notice and due opportunity to be heard, and after planning and zoning commission input and recommendation in accordance with the statutory plan amendment process:

#### GOAL FOR MANAGING THE GREATER SAGE GROUSE IN SANPETE COUNTY

Sanpete County's goal is to protect, maintain, improve and enhance Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) habitat and populations in designated sage grouse priority habitat within Sage Grouse Management Areas (SGMA's) of the County, while balancing the economic and social needs of the residents of Utah.

#### OBJECTIVES

1. Annually enhance GRSG priority habitat in SGMAs in the County consistent with the goals set forth in the State of Utah's Conservation Plan for the Greater Sage Grouse (State Plan).
2. Increase GRSG opportunity area acreage adjacent to priority habitat in SGMAs in the County, consistent with the goals set forth in the State Plan.

3. Sustain and increase the population of males within priority habitat I SMGAs in the County, consistent with the goals set forth in the State Plan.
4. Ensure needed seasonal migration paths within SGMAs and between populations, making reasonable adjustments for the effects of various environmental factors.
5. Land areas outside priority habitat would not be managed for the conservation of the species. No specific management actions are provided for this habitat.
6. The County will coordinate the efforts of BLM, Forest Service, FWS, state agencies, local government and others to accomplish the purposes of this Plan.

## DEFINITIONS

1. Sage Grouse Management Areas (SGMAs), as shown on Map 1, represent the best opportunity for high-value, focused conservation efforts for the species in Sanpete County. This approach recognizes and accepts current use of the land in the SGMAs, and identifies potential future uses which may cause conflict with the needs of the species. The sage-grouse populations within the SGMAs all lend themselves to increases through appropriate protective measures and habitat enhancements, so each SGMA identifies areas on the landscape that provide these additional habitat enhancement opportunities (Opportunity Areas) for greater sage-grouse. Sage-grouse habitat outside the SGMAs is not required for long-term conservation of the species. Much of this habitat has already been disturbed by human and natural causes, and is not suitable for enhancement or improvement. Therefore, greater sage-grouse populations in these areas outside of SGMAs are not considered essential to perpetuation of the species in the County, and no specific management actions for this habitat are recommended or required. *These SGMAs encompass the highest sage-grouse breeding density areas, which together with all SGMAs in Utah currently support greater than 90% of the Utah aggregate population of greater sage-grouse.*
2. Nesting and Brooding Areas, Nesting and Brooding Areas with Winter Habitat, Winter Habitat Areas and Other Habitat mean those specific areas within a particular SGMA, so labeled and illustrated on Map 1. Nesting and Brooding Areas, Nesting and Brooding Areas with Winter Habitat, Winter Habitat Areas and Other Habitat are sometimes collectively referred to as priority habitat within an SGMA.
3. Priority habitat within an SGMA means the collective sum of all Nesting and Brooding Areas, Nesting and Brooding Areas with Winter Habitat, Winter Habitat and Other Habitat within an SGMA according to Map 1.

4. Opportunity areas are those land areas within an SGMA, so identified and illustrated in Map 1, that currently are not priority habitat. Opportunity areas do not currently contribute to the life cycle of sage-grouse, but are areas where restoration or rehabilitation efforts can provide additional habitat when linked to existing sage-grouse populations. In Utah, the majority of these opportunity areas are lands that have been altered due to wildfire or the proliferation of invasive plant species. Examples include areas where pinion-juniper, conifers, deciduous shrubs or other plant species have encroached upon habitat, rendering it less useful or useless as habitat. Opportunity areas may be transformed into either habitat or non-habitat based upon natural events or management choices, and may be used to mitigate disturbance within habitat as appropriate. Opportunity areas may be employed to meet improvement, restoration or rehabilitation goals, or as mitigation areas for disturbance within habitat. If this occurs, an opportunity area may become habitat and as part of the calculation for disturbance limitations. Alternatively, opportunity areas may be employed as the site for disturbances which are diverted from habitat, or other economic proposals not involving habitat, and therefore become non-habitat. In either event, boundaries of the priority habitat within an SGMA, or the SGMA itself, should be adjusted accordingly.

## MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

### 1. Designation of Priority Habitat, General Habitat and Opportunity Areas

See Map 1.

No specific management provisions are proposed for non-habitat areas within an SGMA, except to consider noise and permanent structure stipulations around a lek, and to note that, birds may fly over the non-habitat as they connect to other populations or seasonal habitat areas. (Corridors may or may not be included as habitat within the population area, depending on local conditions, topography, and other factors. Corridors are important to GRSG, but may not require restrictions on human activity. As a general rule, it will be adequate to avoid removal of sagebrush and to minimize development that would create a physical barrier to GRSG movement in these areas.)

These acreages and the map are subject to coordinated review and refinement during implementation in coordination with federal, state, other local and private persons or entities. On-the-ground projects may contribute to this refined mapping for the project area. Review should include, for example, changes in the distribution of disturbance, the increases in habitat through enhancement or improvement, decreases in habitat through wildfire or other events, status of population numbers, and related items.

Adjustments to priority habitat, opportunity areas and SGMA boundaries will be reviewed every five years, unless large-scale events such as wildfire, and successful annual events, such as habitat enhancement or improvement, necessitate a more frequent adjustment. Adjustments may include expansion or constriction of the external

boundaries and a redrawing of the internal boundaries among habitat, non-habitat and opportunity areas.

## 2. Managing For New and Permanent Disturbances in Priority Habitat

### 2.1 General hierarchical protocol for managing activities in priority habitat:

(A) First undertake all reasonable attempts to avoid new and permanent disturbance to priority habitat;

(B) Secondly, if a new and permanent disturbance cannot reasonably be avoided, then minimize such disturbance so that no more than 5% of federally and state managed priority habitat within any particular SGMA is newly, permanently and cumulatively disturbed, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions. First coordinate with Utah DWR when the disturbance is contemplated;

(C) Thirdly, if new and permanent disturbance cannot reasonably be minimized, resulting in more than 5% of federally and state managed priority habitat within any particular SGMA becoming newly and permanently disturbed, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions, then mitigate such excess disturbance elsewhere within the SGMA. First coordinate with Utah DWR when the disturbance and mitigation are contemplated.

### 2.2 Definition of Disturbance

Disturbance is defined as any ground disturbing activity, event or action that will either eliminate or render greater sage-grouse habitat not useable for the life-cycle of the bird, or any human activities and presence which cause a negative response from Greater Sage Grouse within the SGMA at either the population or local scale.

### 2.3 Definition of Permanent Disturbance

Permanent Disturbance means a disturbance where the effects thereof would be expected to last five years or more.

Temporary Disturbance means a disturbance where the effects thereof would be expected to last less than five years.

Special Rule Concerning Fire: Not all fires are permanently harmful to greater sage grouse habitat; some fires are actually beneficial to greater sage grouse habitat. A fire related disturbance shall constitute a permanent disturbance only if the Final Average Habitat Value Rating of the federally and state managed priority habitat of a particular SGMA, as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), decreases by more than 0.3 over a period of at least ten years.

## 2.4 Calculation of Permanent Disturbance Area

The area of permanent disturbance is the area within a spatial polygon defined by the outside limits of the actual disturbed area, plus the area outside of this polygon where effects of the project, based on the type of project, could be expected to cause a disturbance as defined in Section 2.2 lasting five years or more.

The cumulative calculation of permanent disturbance in any population area and specific habitats within a population area, is the aggregate of the various man made projects, construction and land use, as modified by the effects of rehabilitation, restoration or other mitigation actions. This does not include natural event disturbances.

## 2.5 Cases of Two or More Counties

Many of the State of Utah Sage-Grouse Management Areas extend into two or more counties. In such cases, the 5% limitation shall be apportioned to each county's share of federally and state managed priority habitat in proportion to the total amount of federally or state managed priority habitat within the overall larger SGMA.

## 2.6 Adaptive Flexibility for Special Circumstances

Because of the highly discontinuous nature of GRSG habitat in Utah, and because many SGMA's are a composite of habitat, non-habitat and opportunity areas. In many cases, it may be difficult to discern whether an existing dispersed use is part of habitat or non-habitat, and thereby make an accurate calculation of the base for the limitation calculation difficult to determine. If it should become sufficiently apparent that an accurate determination of the base for the limitation calculation is not feasible, then the County in coordination with Utah DWR may propose and seek approval for an alternative measurement of, or technique to measure, the cumulative effects of disturbance.

## 3. Managing For Other Disturbances in Leks, Nesting/Brooding Areas and Winter Habitat

### 3.1 Dates For Seasonal Restrictions in Lek, Nesting/Brooding and Winter Habitat Areas

Within certain portions of federally or state managed priority habitat in seasonal SGMA's during the corresponding seasonal use periods, avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) that will disturb GRSG use of the seasonal area by employing seasonal stipulations as follows:

- In leks (for lek attendance or breeding) from Feb 15 – May 15.
- In nesting or brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
- In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.

Specific time and distance determinations for all these seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions for all these seasonal stipulations, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.

### 3.2 Leks Within Priority Habitat - Seasonal Restrictions

Avoid disturbance within this area, if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.

- If avoidance is not possible, use minimization as appropriate to the area.
- If minimization is not sufficient, mitigation is required (see mitigation section below).
- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within one mile of the lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- Fences should not be located on or adjacent to leks where bird collisions would be expected to occur. If required, the construction of any fences near the lek should follow the standards identified in the NRCS fence collision risk tool (NRCS/CEAP Conservation Insight Publication “Applying the Sage Grouse Fence Collision Risk Tool to Reduce Bird Strikes”).
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the background level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Implement time-of-day stipulations during the season when the lek is occupied (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise).

### 3.3 Nesting and Brood-Rearing Areas Within Priority Habitat - Seasonal Restrictions

- Avoid disturbance within these areas, if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance is not possible, use minimization as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation to provide food and shelter).
- If minimization is not sufficient, mitigation is required (see mitigation section below).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of the surface area of federally and state managed nesting habitat within the priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Employ noise stipulations which allow no more than 10 db rise above ambient noise levels at the edge of the lek.

### 3.4 Winter Habitat within Priority Habitat - Seasonal Restrictions

- Avoid disturbance within the area, if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area. Minimization provisions include, for example, the location of development in habitat of least importance, or by locating development to take advantage of topographic screening.
- If minimization is not sufficient, mitigation is required (see mitigation section below).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of the surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage the area to maintain maximum amount of sagebrush, especially tall sagebrush, which would be available to greater sage-grouse above snow during a severe winter. Tall sagebrush is capable of standing above heavier than normal snowfall.
- Sagebrush treatment projects within this area need pre-approval by the appropriate regulatory agency in coordination with the DWR. Sagebrush treatment projects within winter habitat should maintain 80% of the available habitat as tall sagebrush; 20% of the habitat can be managed for younger age classes, if appropriate.

#### 4. Predation

Predation control and management should be managed by Wildlife Services, Department of Agriculture and Food, in coordination with the Division of Wildlife Resources.

Eliminate or minimize external food sources for corvids, particularly dumps, waste transfer facilities, and road kill.

Apply habitat management practices (e.g. grazing management, vegetation treatments) that decrease the effectiveness of predators.

#### 5. Opportunity Areas

Opportunity areas in SGMA's currently do not contribute to the life cycle of sage-grouse but are areas where restoration or rehabilitation efforts can provide additional habitat when linked to existing sage-grouse populations. Opportunity areas may be transformed into either habitat or non-habitat based upon natural events or management choices, and may be used to mitigate disturbance within habitat as appropriate.

Opportunity areas may be employed to meet improvement, restoration or rehabilitation goals, or as mitigation areas for disturbance within habitat. If this occurs, an opportunity area may become habitat and be managed as such, especially as part of the calculation for disturbance limitations. Alternatively, opportunity areas may be employed as the site

for disturbances which are diverted from habitat, or other economic proposals not involving habitat, and therefore become non-habitat. In either event, boundaries of the priority habitat, or the land types within, should be adjusted accordingly.

## 6. Mitigation

Mitigation actions are designed to create new habitat or ameliorate disturbances by the creation of or protection of other habitat. Mitigation for a disturbance must be shown to be effective in the time-frame of the activity, not at some future date. Effective mitigation does not require that birds are immediately present using the land, only that the habitat is capable of supporting birds as part of their yearly life-cycle. However mitigation should be performed in areas which have the highest likelihood of occupation by the species. The amount of mitigation, if required, should be calculated based on the effects generated within priority habitat inside an SGMA.

Prioritize areas for habitat improvement to make best use of mitigation funds.

Mitigation for a disturbance should not necessarily be tied to reclamation efforts at the actual site of the disturbance. Mitigation may occur locally, elsewhere in the same population area, or in another population area, based on the location, which offers greater potential for enhancing GRSG populations, so long as the location of the mitigation does not result in the loss of resiliency, representation or redundancy of the species in Utah. The Public Lands Policy Coordination Office, with assistance from the Division of Wildlife Resources, Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture and Food, and other entities, shall coordinate and oversee the creation and operation of a Greater Sage-Grouse Mitigation Bank in Utah. The operation of this Mitigation Bank will seek to rehabilitate or restore lands as habitat prior to need, as well as coordinate the mitigation for development or other effects upon the habitat of the GRSG. Once operational, contributions to the Bank will be welcome.

Mitigation may be required in nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, and other priority habitat.

### 6.1 Examples of Successful Mitigation

Examples of Successful Mitigation for various GRSG habitat types include the following:

#### Leks

- Removal of trees on or adjacent to the lek.
- Removal or marking of fences on or adjacent to the lek.
- Employment of off-site mitigation (e.g., use of the concept of a mitigation bank, if appropriate).

## Nesting and Brood-Rearing Areas

- Removal of trees to no more than 5% cover (the closer to 0% the better) and maintenance of at least 10% sagebrush cover.
- Maintain forb cover greater than 10% and greater than 10% grass cover during nesting and brood-rearing season.
- Maintain or improve wet meadows, when present.
- Installation of green-strips or firebreaks to protect existing nesting habitat.
- Employment of off-site mitigation (e.g., use of the concept of a mitigation bank, if appropriate).
- Mitigation should be calculated at a minimum of a 4:1 ratio starting with the first acre disturbed.

## Winter Habitat

- Removal of trees to less than 5% cover (the closer to 0% the better) and maintenance of at least 10% sagebrush cover.
- Installation of green-strips or firebreaks to protect existing winter habitat.
- Employment of off-site mitigation (e.g., use of the concept of a mitigation bank, if appropriate).
- Mitigation should be calculated at a 4:1 ratio starting with the first acre disturbed.

## Other Habitats

- Removal of trees to less than 5% cover and maintenance of at least 10% sage brush cover.
- Maintain forb cover greater than 10% and grass cover greater than 10% during nesting/brood-rearing season.
- Maintain or improve wet meadows, when present.
- Installation of green-strips or firebreaks to protect existing habitat.
- Employment of off-site mitigation (e.g., use of the concept of a mitigation bank, if appropriate).
- Mitigation should be calculated at a 1:1 ratio with first acre disturbed.

## 7 Rights of Way (ROWs)

7.1 Manage for new ROWs in federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

7.2 Manage for new ROWs outside of federally and state managed priority habitat but in SGMA's areas consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

### 7.3 Construction Disturbance in Priority Habitat

Management stipulations and conditions should focus on mitigating direct disturbance during construction of new ROWs. Should new research demonstrate indirect impacts to greater sage-grouse production, additional mitigation measures may be required.

Priority habitat would be designated as an avoidance area for new ROWs. Apply stipulations as follows, as well as best management practices accepted by industry and state and federal agencies:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat, if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

Engage in reclamation efforts as projects are completed.

Recognize that stipulations for other species (e.g. raptors) may impede the ability to effectively reclaim disturbed areas, and remove those barriers in order to achieve immediate and effective reclamation, if otherwise allowable by law.

#### 7.4 Electrical Transmission Lines

For electrical transmission lines, and where feasible and consistent with federally required electrical separation standards, site new linear transmission features in existing corridors, or at a minimum, in concert with existing linear features in GRSG habitat. Siting linear features accordingly shall be deemed to be mitigation for the siting of that linear feature. Mitigation for the direct effects of construction is still required.

GRSG habitat outside priority habitat would not be managed for the conservation of the species. No specific management actions are provided for this habitat.

## 8 Mineral Withdrawals

Do not propose additional federally or state managed lands in SGMA's (priority habitat or otherwise) and do not propose additional non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within SGMA's (priority habitat or otherwise) for locatable mineral withdrawal.

### 9. Wind Energy Development

9.1 Priority habitat would be available for wind energy development, though it would be designated as an avoidance area for wind energy development.

9.2 Manage wind energy development in state and federally managed priority habitat as follows consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

9.3 Manage wind energy development outside of federally and state managed priority habitat but in SGMAs consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

9.4 Apply stipulations as follows, as well as best management practices accepted by industry and state and federal agencies:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.

- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat, if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

9.5 Engage in reclamation efforts as projects are completed.

9.6 Recognize that stipulations for other species (e.g. raptors) may impede the ability to effectively reclaim disturbed areas, and remove those barriers in order to achieve immediate and effective reclamation, if otherwise allowable by law.

## 10. Solar Energy Development

10.1 Priority habitat would be available for solar energy development, though it would be designated as an avoidance area for solar energy development.

10.2 Manage solar energy development in federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

10.3 Manage solar energy development outside of federally and state managed priority habitat but in SGMAs consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

10.4 Apply stipulations as follows, as well as best management practices accepted by industry and state and federal agencies:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:

- On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
- In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
- In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
- Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat, if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

10.5 Engage in reclamation efforts as projects are completed.

10.6 Recognize that stipulations for other species (e.g. raptors) may impede the ability to effectively reclaim disturbed areas, and remove those barriers in order to achieve immediate and effective reclamation, if otherwise allowable by law.

## 11 Vegetation Management/Habitat Restoration

11.1 Protection of GRSG habitat in SGMA's is the primary focus of conservation efforts, but many locations can be reclaimed or restored by active vegetation management actions. For example:

- removal of encroaching conifers may create new habitat or increase the carrying capacity of habitat and thereby expand grouse populations, or
- the distribution of water into wet meadow areas may improve seasonal brood-rearing range and enhance greater sage-grouse recruitment.

11.2 Aggressively remove encroaching conifers and other plant species in SGMA's to expand GRSG habitat where possible. Sagebrush treatment projects within nesting and winter habitat should be limited and require pre-approval by the appropriate regulatory agency in discussions with DWR. Sagebrush treatment projects should maintain 80% of the available habitat as sagebrush within the federally or state managed project area; 20% of such habitat can be managed for younger age classes of sagebrush, if appropriate. These treatments are generally recommended only to improve brood-rearing habitat, but need to be carefully considered before use in winter and other habitat.

11.3 Within federally or state managed priority habitat, GRSG stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law.

11.4 Design water developments to enhance mesic habitat for use by greater sage-grouse and maintain adequate vegetation in wet meadows. Within SGMAs, greater sage-grouse stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law.

11.5 Aggressively remove cheatgrass and other invasive species, and rehabilitate areas to provide additional habitat for GRSG where possible.

## 12 Integrated Invasive Species Management

Aggressively respond to new infestations to keeping invasive species from spreading. Every effort should be made to identify and treat new infestations before they become larger problems. Additionally containment of known infestations in or near sagebrush habitats should be a high priority for all land management agencies.

## 13 Fire and Fuels Management

13.1 Implement the following wildfire response measures:

- Create and implement a statewide fire agency agreement(s) that will eliminate jurisdictional boundaries and allow for immediate response to natural fire in priority habitat.
- Allow use of fire-retardant vegetation that will buffer areas of high quality GRSG habitat from catastrophic fire.
- Use prescriptive fire with caution in sagebrush habitat. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has prepared information that explains the risks from using prescribed fire in xeric sagebrush habitats.
- Prescribed fire should only be used at higher elevations and in a manner designed prescriptively to benefit GRSG.
- Conduct effective research into controlling fire size and protecting remaining GRSG areas that are adjacent to high-risk cheatgrass areas.
- Focus research efforts on effective reclamation and restoration of landscapes altered by wildfire.
- Within winter habitat, manage to maintain maximum amount of sagebrush, especially tall sagebrush, which would be available to GRSG above snow during a severe winter. Tall sagebrush is capable of standing above heavier than normal snowfall.
- Sagebrush treatment projects within winter habitat need pre-approval by the appropriate regulatory agency in coordination with the DWR. Sagebrush treatment projects within winter habitat should maintain 80% of the available habitat as tall sagebrush; 20% of the habitat can be managed for younger age classes, if appropriate.

- Coordinate the needs and efforts related to sage-grouse with the State of Utah committee that was formed to develop a collaborative process to protect the health and welfare by reducing the size and frequency of catastrophic fires.

13.2 Make extensive use of prescriptive grazing to specifically reduce fire size and intensity on all types of landownership, where appropriate. This could be particularly effective in areas where cheatgrass is encroaching on sagebrush habitat. This will require cooperation and coordination among different land managers and owners and livestock owners. In some cases feed supplementation and water hauling may need to be utilized to obtain the desired results.

13.3 Create and implement a statewide fire agency agreement(s) that will eliminate jurisdictional boundaries and allow for immediate response to natural fire in priority habitat. These should include fire suppression actions recommended locally, including, but not limited to:

- first strike agreements that allow aggressive fire control on an all-land jurisdictional basis;
- allocation of resources to maintain enhanced abilities of all fire agencies to combat ignitions in priority habitat.
- allocation of resources to immediately commence restoration of habitats impacted by wildfire by all responsible agencies; and removal or establishment of waiver provisions for procedural barriers that may impact the ability of responsible agencies to respond to wildfire with effective reclamation or rehabilitation, such as federal raptor stipulations, cultural assessments, and the like.

13.4 Fire by natural ignition should be addressed as a serious threat.

13.5 Immediate, proactive means to reduce or eliminate the spread of invasive species, particularly cheatgrass, after a wildfire, is a high priority.

#### 14 Non Energy Solid Leasable Minerals

14.1 Manage non-energy leasable minerals on federal and state managed lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

14.2 Manage non-energy leasable minerals on federal and state managed lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests outside of federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

14.3 Consider leasing federally and state managed lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within priority habitat for non-energy leasable minerals. Limit or

ameliorate impacts from mineral leasing and development through the use of the following stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within federally or state managed priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in federally or state managed priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage federally and state managed priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.
- Recognize that surface vents associated with underground mining are essential for human safety, and must be permitted under the provisions of this alternative.

14.4 GRSG habitat outside priority habitat would not be managed for the conservation of the species. No specific management actions are provided for this habitat.

14.5 Commercial prospecting activities associated with non-energy leasable minerals would be required to comply with the same stipulations identified for leasing and development, above.

## 15 Solid Minerals - Coal

### 15.1 Leases Associated with Surface Mining:

15.1 Manage coal on federal lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests within the federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

15.2 Manage coal on federal lands and non-federal lands with federal mineral interests outside federally and state managed priority habitat but in SGMAs as follows consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

15.3 Priority habitat would be considered to be suitable for further coal leasing consideration. However, special conditions, conservation measures, and pre-project mitigation requirements that include successful criteria of habitat suitability and GRSG occupancy could be required as identified during the leasing process to protect priority habitat. Impacts to priority habitat within leasing areas would be limited or ameliorated through the use of the following stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least

importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).

- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

#### 15.4 Leases Associated with Sub-Surface Mining:

Consider leasing federally and state managed priority habitat for coal that would be extracted through sub-surface mining. Impacts would be limited or ameliorated through adherence to the following stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

- Recognize that surface vents associated with underground mining are essential for human safety, and must be permitted under the provisions of this alternative.

15.5 Exploration activities within priority habitat would be required to comply with the same stipulations identified for leasing and development, above.

## 16 Locatable Minerals

16.1 Priority habitat and opportunity areas that are not already withdrawn or proposed for withdrawal would be available for locatable mineral entry.

16.2 To the extent allowable by laws and regulations and to the extent the claimant would be willing to apply the standards, impacts would be limited or ameliorated through the use of the following stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area within the priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

16.3 Recognize that surface vents associated with underground mining are essential for human safety, and must be permitted under the provisions of this alternative.

## 17 Mineral Materials

17.1 Manage mineral materials in federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

17.2 Manage mineral materials outside of federally and state managed priority habitat but in SGMAs consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

17.3 Priority habitat would be open to mineral materials. Impacts would be limited or ameliorated through the use of the following stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority areas should not exceed 5% of federally and state managed surface area of priority

habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.

- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

## 18 Fluid Minerals

18.1 Manage fluid mineral leasing in federally and state managed priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

18.2 Manage fluid minerals outside of federally and state managed priority habitat but in SGMA's consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

## 19 Unleased Fluid Mineral Estate

### Unleased Areas within Priority Habitat:

Priority habitat would be designated as open to oil and gas leasing subject to controlled surface use stipulations (see list below) and the timing stipulations.

19.1 Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats (specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist):

- Winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
- Nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
- On leks from Feb 15 – May 15

19.2 Where leasing/development is allowed within priority habitat, impacts from development would be limited or ameliorated through the use of the following controlled surface use stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)

- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).
- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally and state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

19.3 Allow geophysical exploration within priority habitat to obtain exploratory information. Geophysical exploration would be subject to the same seasonal and controlled surface use stipulations as would be applied to leases within priority habitat

## 20 Leased Federal Mineral Estate

20.1 All existing uses are explicitly recognized and shall not be affected by the implementation of this plan.

20.2 All existing uses are explicitly recognized by this plan and shall not be affected by the implementation of this plan. The sage-grouse conservation measures currently identified in the associated NEPA documents for each of these projects would continue to be implemented to protect priority habitat. Provisions of this plan would not be added to the measures identified each specific project.

20.3 Allow exploratory drilling within priority habitat, subject to the same seasonal and controlled surface use stipulations as would be applied to leases within priority habitat.

## 21 Mineral Split Estate

Because the surface estate is the key to conservation of habitat, the priority habitat has been mapped according to surface ownership. However, implementation of this plan will have to accommodate the dominant nature of the mineral estate, and react accordingly.

## 22 Comprehensive Travel and Transportation Management

22.1 Manage OHV use in **federally and state managed** priority habitat consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

22.2 Manage OHV use outside **federally and state managed** priority habitat but in SGMA's consistent with the State Plan, existing in BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

22.3 Manage OHV use in Forest Service managed priority habitat as limited to existing routes.

22.4 Counties should adopt and enforce travel management plans that include consideration for greater sage-grouse.

22.5 Develop an educational process to advise OHV users of the potential for conflict with GRSG.

## 23 Recreation and Visitor Services

23.1 Limit or ameliorate impacts from recreation activities through the use of the following stipulations:

- New permanent disturbance, including structures, fences, and buildings, should not be located within the occupied lek itself.
- No permanent disturbance within 1 mile of an occupied lek, unless it is not visible to the sage-grouse using the lek.
- New permanent tall structures should not be located within one mile of the lek, if visible by the birds within the lek.
- A disturbance outside the lek should not produce noise which rises more than 10 db above the ambient (background) level at the edge of the lek during breeding season.
- Apply time-of-day stipulations when the lek is active (e.g., no activity from 2-hours before sunrise to 2-hours after sunrise)
- Avoid activities (construction, vehicle noise, etc.) in the following seasons and habitats:
  - On leks from Feb 15 – May 15 to avoid activities that will disturb lek attendance or breeding.
  - In nesting and brood-rearing areas from Apr 1 – Aug 15.
  - In winter habitat from Nov 15 – Mar 15.
  - Specific time and distance determinations for seasonal stipulations would be based on site-specific conditions, in coordination with the local UDWR biologist.
- Avoid disturbance within priority habitat (nesting and brood-rearing areas, winter habitat, other habitat), if possible. Project proponents must demonstrate why avoidance is not possible.
- If avoidance in priority habitat is not possible, minimize as appropriate to the area (e.g., try to minimize effects by locating development in habitat of the least

importance, take advantage of topographic features to screen the disturbance, or maintaining and enhancing wet meadow and riparian vegetation).

- After minimization, mitigation is required (see mitigation section).
- Cumulative new permanent disturbance in federally or state managed priority habitat should not exceed 5% of surface area of federally and state managed priority habitat of the particular SGMA, taking into account the effects of rehabilitation, restoration and other mitigation actions.
- Manage priority habitat to avoid barriers to migration, if applicable.

## 24 Livestock Grazing

24.1 Continue to make SGMA's available for livestock grazing.

24.2 Active and permitted AUMs for livestock grazing would be maintained at levels approved in current existing BLM, Forest Service and SITLA RMPs, Forest Plans, and grazing and allotment plans.

24.3 Existing grazing operations would utilize recognized rangeland best management practices to increase the necessary vegetation, and thereby increase the potential for nesting success and population recruitment

24.4 Should site-specific concerns be raised about the effect of grazing upon priority habitat, and such effects are documented over a sufficiently long time-frame, corrective management actions should be addressed through the application of best management practices, including consideration of those identified by the Department of Agriculture and Food's Grazing Improvement Program.

24.5 Consider priority seasonal habitat requirements when managing sagebrush rangelands. Considerations to be taken into account include the following:

### 24.6 Leks

- Be cautious of man-made structures on lek sites.
- Reduce shrub encroachment and maintain the "open" area that characterizes a typical lek site.
- Identify the location of leks through discussions with DWR biologists.

### 24.7 Nesting/Early Brood-Rearing

- Maintain and enhance the existing sagebrush/plant communities.
- Manage these areas to increase herbaceous cover by sustaining a mosaic of sagebrush and open areas.
- Avoid repeated, annual heavy use of these areas by implementing periodic rest and/or deferment periods during the critical growing season.

### 24.8 Late Brood-Rearing

- Avoid continuous (season-long) grazing of wet meadows and riparian habitats, especially under drought conditions when temperatures are high.

#### 24.9 Winter Habitat

- Carefully manage levels of browsing or activities in sagebrush areas that constitute priority habitat that would reduce GRSG access to these areas for food and cover.
- The potential impact of livestock grazing on winter habitat can be positive or negative depending on scale and location of use.

24.10 Address incompatible grazing strategies through established rangeland management practices consistent with the maintenance or enhancement of habitat.

24.11 Carefully manage the “time,” “timing,” and “intensity” of grazing in sagebrush priority habitats to provide for the seasonal needs of GRSG. Specific prescriptions can be applied through more intensive management to address special needs or weak links in the biological year of GRSG production.

24.12 Where time controlled grazing is not an option, moderate use of occupied priority habitats will usually leave mosaic or patchy areas where some plants are ungrazed. Managing for moderate utilization levels (40%) after the period of rapid vegetation growth may provide enough residual cover for GRSG nesting and early brood-rearing the subsequent spring.

24.13 Evaluation of priority habitat nesting and escape cover must be determined on a site-specific basis.

24.14 Livestock operations with a small amount of nesting habitat should consider special management activities to protect nesting and early brood-rearing areas. Lighter use of areas may be warranted. In areas with large tracts of contiguous habitat, livestock producers should manage the vegetation on a rotational grazing basis, which may leave 10 - 20 percent of the area ungrazed periodically in combination with deferring or altering timing of grazing in other areas. In priority habitat where GRSG nesting is common, managing for moderate use of plant growth across the landscape would be appropriate. Well-managed ranches with comprehensive grazing strategies that include short-term or duration grazing, higher levels of use may be acceptable, provided these higher levels of use include rested vegetation in nearby areas.

24.15 Design water developments to enhance mesic priority habitat for use by GRSG and maintain adequate vegetation in wet meadows. Within priority habitat, GRSG stipulations should take precedence over stipulations for other species if conflicts occur, if otherwise allowable by law

24.16 Continue livestock grazing strategies that have proven effective in maintaining and enhancing priority habitat, unless compelling and credible cause-and-effect evidence indicates a disturbance exists.

24.17 Address incompatible grazing strategies through established rangeland management practices consistent with the maintenance or enhancement of priority habitat, general habitat and opportunity areas.

24.18 Locate livestock fences away from leks and employ the NRCS fence standards (see NRCS/CEAP Conservation Insight Publication “Applying the Sage Grouse Fence Collision Risk Tool to Reduce Bird Strikes.”)

24.19 Fences should not be located on or adjacent to leks where bird collisions would be expected to occur. Employ NRCS fence collision risk tool (NRCS/CEAP Conservation Insight Publication “Applying the Sage Grouse Fence Collision Risk Tool to Reduce Bird Strikes”).

24.20 Aggressively respond to new infestations to keeping invasive species from spreading. Every effort should be made to identify and treat new infestations before they become larger problems. Additionally containment of known infestations in or near sagebrush habitats should be a high priority for all land management agencies.

## 25 Wild Horses and Burros

25.1 Manage wild horse and burro population levels within established Appropriate Management Levels (AML) to ensure a balance among wild horses, wildlife, livestock, and other resources.

25.2 Prioritize wild horse/burro gathers based on monitoring data.

25.3 Prepare or amend herd management area plans on an as needed basis.

25.4 Periodically evaluate and make adjustments to AMLs based on monitoring data.

## 26 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

No existing or new ACECs include sage-grouse as a relevant and important value for ACEC purposes.

## 27 Utility Corridors

Manage Existing and New Utility Corridors consistent with the State Plan, existing BLM resource management plans (RMPs) and Forest Service Land Use Plans (Forest Plans).

APPROVED BY THE SANPETE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS on the 30<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2013.



Attest:

Sandy Neill  
Sanpete County Clerk

Approved as to Form:

Andy J. Fossil  
Sanpete County Attorney

Claudia Jarrett  
Chair, Sanpete County Board of Commissioners

Voting History:

Commissioner Jarrett - yes

Commissioner Cox - yes

Commissioner Frischknecht - yes